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& Market Research

2005/2006 EMPLOYER SATISFACTION SURVEY REPORT

EMPLOYERS OF ALBERTA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Prepared for
ALBERTA EDUCATION

Prepared by:
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April 2006

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The *2005/2006 Employer Satisfaction Survey* was commissioned by Alberta Education and Alberta Advanced Education. Data collection for the survey was conducted by R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. between December 2nd, 2005 and December 19th, 2005. The objective of the survey was to assess employer satisfaction with recent graduates from Alberta's education system in the following areas: academic and technical skills, non-subject specific skills; and employer satisfaction with the overall responsiveness of Alberta's education system to their human resource needs.

This report highlights the results for employers of recent high school graduates. Recent high school graduates were defined as employees who had graduated from an Alberta high school within the last two years.

In total, 2,200 surveys were completed with Alberta employers. The results of the survey are considered accurate within ± 2.0% (19 times out of 20).

Key Findings

Presence of Recent Graduates

- Twenty-five percent (25%) of Alberta employers currently employ recent Alberta high school graduates. On average, these employers have approximately 9 recent high school graduates on staff.

- Among employers not currently employing recent Alberta high school graduates, approximately one-quarter (24%) indicated that they were looking to hire high school graduates. Operator/labour/warehousing positions, administrative positions, and sales positions were the jobs these employers were most often trying to fill with recent high school graduates.

- The most commonly noted reason for not hiring high school graduates was a lack of interest on the part of graduates and/or lack of graduates applying for the position (36%).

Satisfaction with Alberta's Education system and its Graduates

- Most employers of recent high school graduates agreed that Alberta's education system provides an adequate supply of high school graduates (71%) and that these graduates are provided with appropriate skills (64%).

- Three-quarters (77%) of employers of recent high school graduates were overall satisfied with their skills and quality of work.

- The majority of employers of recent high school graduates were satisfied with the various aspects related to graduates' non-subject specific skills and personal qualities (60% to 86%). Employers were most satisfied with these graduates' ability to work with others towards a common goal (86%), to learn continuously (84%), to work safely (84%), to be adaptable and work individually or in a team (83%), and to participate and contribute to projects and tasks (83%).

- Some employers of recent high school graduates noted skill shortages, including ability to calculate/mathematics skills (13%), poor work ethic/lack of pride in their work (12%) and reading/writing ability (11%).

Assistance for Education and Training

- Half (51%) of employers reported providing assistance to employees within the last two years for education or training in Alberta's education system.

- Time off during the workday to pursue education and training (85%) and an allowed leave of absence (73%) were the most commonly provided assistance.

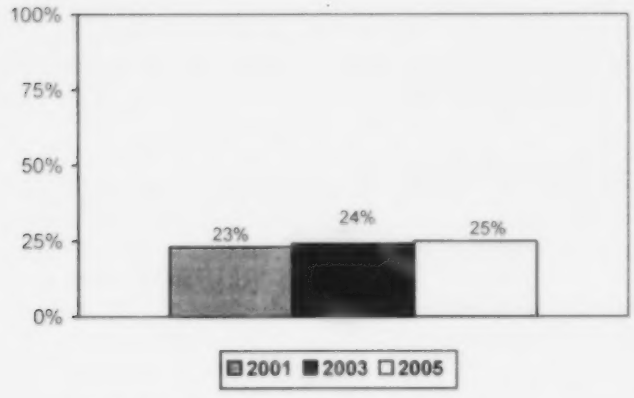
SECTION 1: MEETING ALBERTA EMPLOYERS' NEEDS

1.1 Employment of Recent Graduates

Twenty-five percent (25%) of Alberta employers currently employ recent Alberta high school graduates.

Of the 2,200 employers surveyed, 25% reported they have employees who had graduated from an Alberta high school within the last two years. This result is consistent with previous years.

Chart 1-1
Percentage of Employers who Employ
Recent High School Diploma Graduates



2005 N=2200

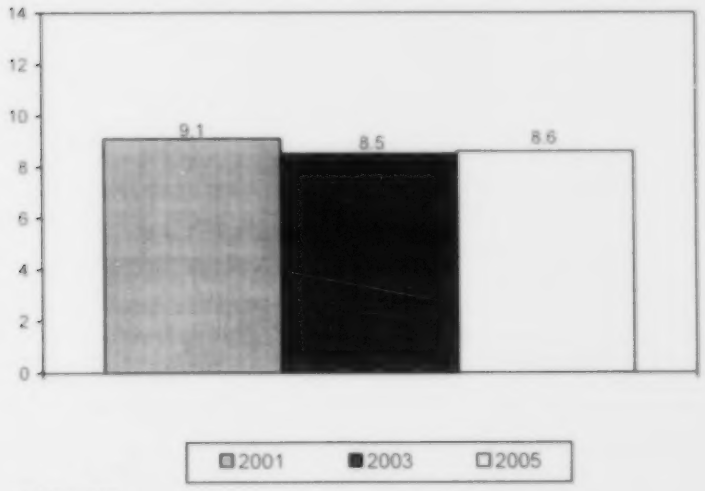
The proportion of employers who employ recent Alberta high school diploma only graduates varies by industry and company size.

- Employers were more likely to employ recent Alberta high school diploma only graduates in the following industries: Accommodation/Food Services (39%), Construction (39%), and Retail Trade (37%). On the other hand, employers were less likely to employ recent Alberta high school diploma only graduates in industries such as Health Care/Social Assistance (19%), Finance/Insurance (17%), Transportation/Warehousing (13%), Professional/Scientific/Technical Services (10%), and Education Services (9%).
- Employers with 20 or more employees were more likely to employ recent Alberta high school diploma only graduates (46%) than those who had fewer employees on staff (8% to 29%).

Employers of recent high school graduates have approximately 9 of these graduates on staff.

Similar to previous years, employers of recent high school graduates report having approximately 9 recent high school graduates on staff.

Chart 1-2
Average Number of Recent High School Graduates on Staff
(excluding zero and outliers)



2005 n=557

The number of recent high school graduates on staff showed some variation by region:

- Employers in the Edmonton region (12) tended to employ, on average, more recent high school diploma graduates, whereas fewer recent high school graduates are working for employers in Northern Alberta (4), especially those in Rural Northern Alberta (3).

1.2 Responsiveness of Alberta's Education System

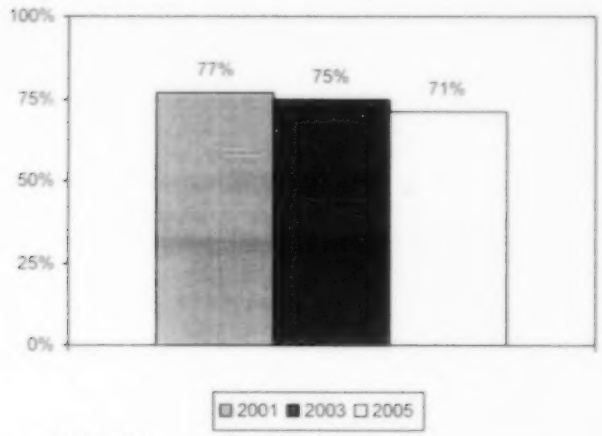
Most (64% to 71%) employers of recent high school graduates agreed that Alberta's education system is responsive to the needs of their company.

Seven-in-ten (71%) employers of recent Alberta high school diploma only graduates agreed that Alberta's education system provides an adequate supply of high school graduates.

Approximately two-thirds (64%) of employers of recent Alberta high school diploma only graduates agreed that Alberta's education system provides these graduates with appropriate skills.

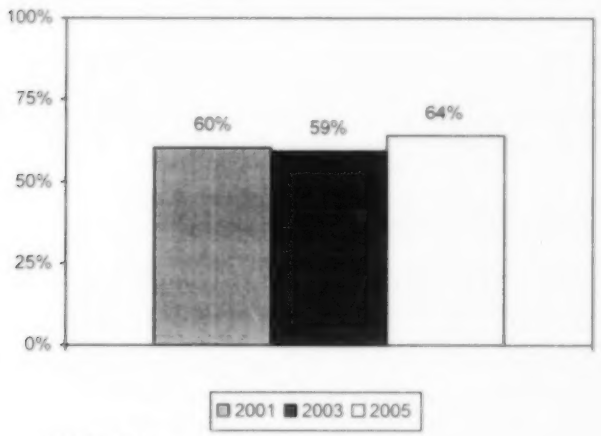
Changes in these ratings compared to previous years are not large enough to rule out sampling variation.

Chart 1-3
Providing an Adequate Supply of Graduates
(among those who employed recent high school only graduates)



2005 n=499

Chart 1-4
Providing Graduates with Appropriate Skills
(among those who employed recent high school only graduates)



2005 n=499

The only notable difference in employers' agreement was found among industry.

- Employers in the Retail Trade were more likely to agree than employers in other industries that recent graduates are provided with appropriate skills (72%).

1.3 Perceived Shortages

Among employers NOT currently employing recent high school graduates, approximately one-quarter (24%) have been looking to hire them.

Employers who do not currently employ recent high school graduates were asked if they had been looking to hire these graduates in the last two years.

Twenty-four percent (24%) of these employers indicated that they were looking to hire high school graduates.

Differences in the proportion of employers looking to hire recent high school graduates were observed by industry, region and company size.

- Employers were more likely to report looking to hire high school graduates in the Administrative Support/Waste Management/Remediation Services (55%), Transportation/Warehousing (39%) and Manufacturing industries (38%).
- Employers in Northern Alberta (30%), including Rural Northern Alberta (33%), were more likely to report looking to hire high school graduates.
- Employers with 10 to 19 staff members were more likely to report looking to hire high school graduates (30%).

1.4 Positions to be Filled

Employers most often reported being unable to fill operator/labour/warehousing positions, administrative positions and sales positions with recent high school graduates.

The most common types of positions that employers who did not hire recent high school graduates were looking to fill, but were unable to do so, were operator/labour/ warehousing positions (20%), sales positions (9%), and administrative positions including clerical (8%) and assistant/secretary (8%) positions (Table 1-5).

Table 1-5
Positions/Occupations for which Employers were Looking to Hire High School Diploma Only Graduates

Position/Occupation	Percentage of Responses
Operator/laborer/warehousing	20%
Sales person (all mentions)	9%
Administrative/office workers/clerical	8%
Administrative assistant/secretary	8%
Truck driver/driving positions	6%
Customer service/counter help	5%
Cashier	4%

Note: Mentions 2% or below are not listed
n= 373

1.5 Reasons Graduates Were not Hired

Alberta employers who wanted to hire recent high school graduates reported lack of interest on the part of graduates as the top reason for not being able to hire them.

Approximately one-third (36%) of the employers who wanted to hire a recent high school graduate but have not done so commented that it is due to a lack of interest on the part of graduates and/or a lack of graduates applying for the position.

Other commonly noted reasons for not hiring a recent high school graduate included employers not needing any new staff members (9%), the lack of a suitable candidate (8%), graduates' lack of experience (6%), and employers hiring only on a seasonal/temporary basis (3%).

Table 1-6
Five Most Frequently Mentioned Reasons for not Hiring Recent High School Graduates

Reason	Percentage of Responses
Graduates not interested/none applied	36%
No need/no opening	9%
Lack of a suitable candidate/didn't find the right person	8%
Lack of experience related to position	6%
Hire seasonally/on a temporary basis	3%

n=373

1.6 Identification of Skills Shortages Among Recent Graduates

Employers who currently have recent high school graduates on staff were asked to identify particular skills/abilities that are missing from these graduates.

Approximately one-quarter (26%) of the employers who employ a recent high school graduate reported that there are no specific skills and/or abilities missing from recent high school graduates.

However, 13% noted that graduates lack mathematics skills/the ability to calculate, 12% mentioned poor work ethic and/or pride in work, 11% mentioned language skills (i.e. writing and reading ability), 9% mentioned lack of initiative/motivation, and 7% mentioned accountability/responsibility.

Table 1-7
Five Frequently Mentioned Skills Shortages

Skill/Ability	Percentage of Responses
Ability to calculate/mathematics skills	13%
Poor work ethic/pride in work	12%
Writing and reading ability-grammar/punctuation	11%
Lack of initiative/motivation	9%
Accountability/responsibility	7%

n=499

1.7 Final Comments About Recent Graduates

Employers surveyed were asked if they had any other comments they would like to make about recent high school graduates of Alberta's education system.

Approximately two-thirds (62%) of employers did not raise any particular concerns regarding recent high school graduates.

Those who provided comments mentioned graduates having a poor work ethic and/or attitude towards work (6%) and their lack of English skills (4%). Three percent (3%) or fewer respondents provided other comments.

Table 1-8
Final Comments Regarding Recent High School Only Graduates

Comment	Percentage of Responses
Poor work ethic/attitude towards work	6%
Poor English skills-writing/spelling/grammar	4%
Need more apprenticeship programs/technical education	3%
Low/inconsistent standards/quality in education	3%
Graduates are well-equipped/well-trained	3%
Lack of initiative/motivation	3%
Satisfactory/they are doing a good job	3%
Nothing/DK/NA	62%

N=2200
Note: Mentions 2% or below are not listed

SECTION 2: SATISFACTION WITH GRADUATES AND ALBERTA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

2.1 Overall Satisfaction with Skills and Quality of Work

Employers of recent high school graduates were overall satisfied with the graduates' skills and quality of work.

Seventy-seven percent (77%) of employers who employed recent high school graduates reported being satisfied ("satisfied" or "very satisfied") with the overall skills and quality of work of these graduates.

Employers' level of satisfaction was consistent across region, industry, company size, and assistance provided for education or training.

2.2 Satisfaction with Non-Subject Specific Skills and Personal Qualities

Respondents who currently employ recent graduates were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with graduates' non-subject specific skills and personal qualities, including:

- The ability to communicate in speech and writing;
- The ability to manage information from a variety of areas;
- The ability to use numbers to decide what is required for the job;
- The ability to think and solve problems;
- Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours;
- Being responsible for work and accountable for actions;
- Being adaptable – having the ability to work as an individual or within a team;
- The ability to learn continuously;
- The ability to work safely;
- The ability to work with others towards a common goal;
- The ability to participate and contribute in projects and tasks; and
- The ability to transition effectively from school to work.

Overall, the majority of employers of recent high school graduates reported being satisfied with graduates' non-subject specific skills and personal qualities.

- The vast majority of employers of recent high school graduates were satisfied ("satisfied" or "very satisfied") with graduates' ability to work with others towards a common goal (86%), to learn continuously (84%), to work safely (84%), to be adaptable and work either as an individual or in a team (83%), and to participate and contribute to projects and tasks (83%).

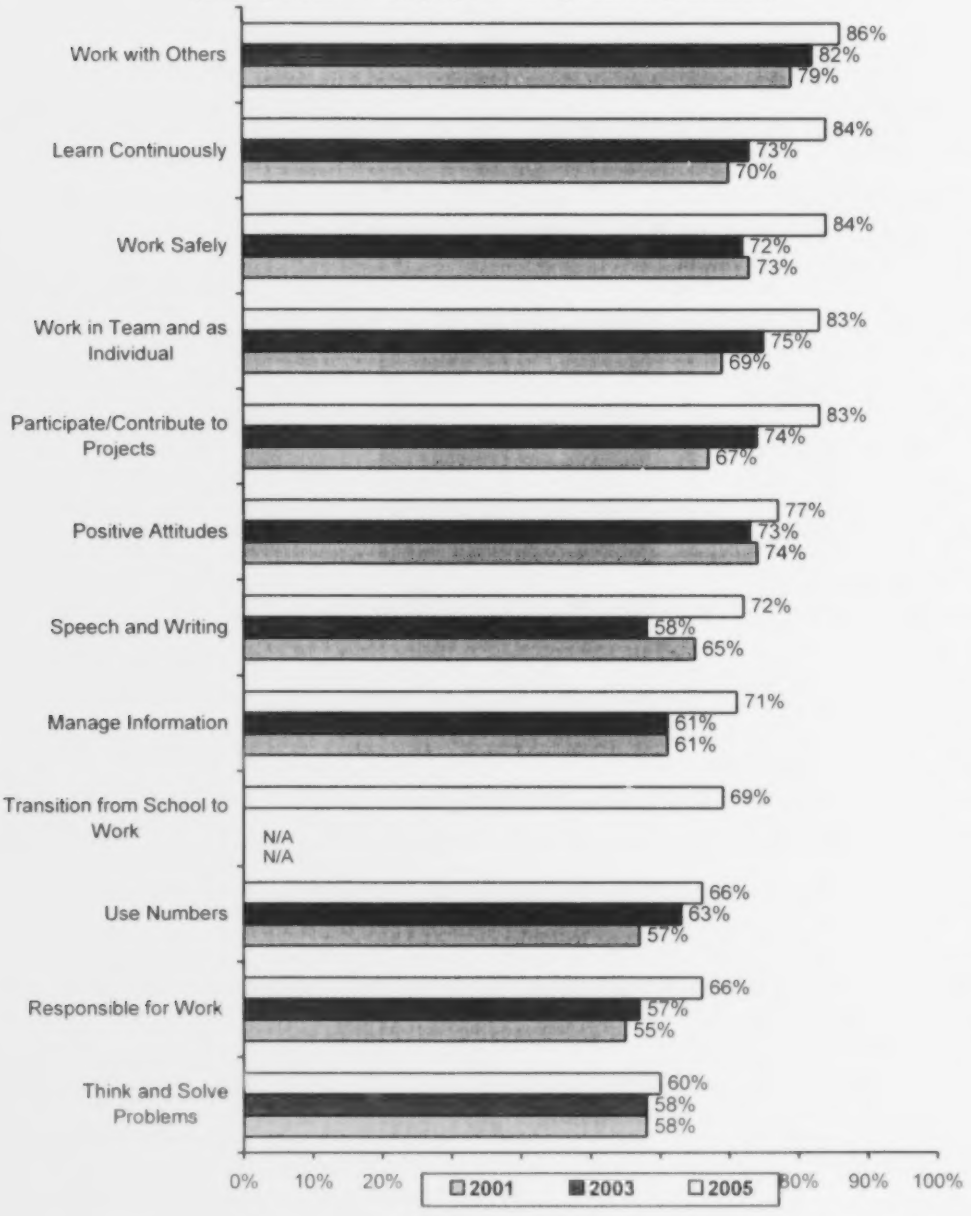
- At least two-thirds of employers were satisfied with recent high school graduates demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours (77%); their ability to communicate in speech and writing (72%), manage information from a variety of areas (71%), transition effectively from school to work (69%), use numbers to decide what is required for the job (66%); and being responsible for work and accountable for actions (66%). Employers were least satisfied with graduates' ability to think and solve problems (60%).

- As illustrated in Chart 2-1, in 2005, employers' satisfaction for most non-subject specific skills and personal qualities was higher than in 2003.

- Differences in employer satisfaction with recent graduates' non-subject specific skills and personal qualities were noted by company size and region.

    - Employers with 5 to 9 employees were more likely to be satisfied with recent high school graduates' ability to communicate in speech and writing (81%).
    - Employers with 1 to 4 employees were more likely to be satisfied with recent graduates' ability to manage information from a variety of sources (82%), to use numbers to decide what is required for the job (82%), to think and solve problems (78%), and to be responsible for work and accountable for actions (80%).
    - Employers in Rural Central Alberta were more likely to be satisfied with recent graduates' ability to be responsible for work and accountable for actions (77%) and their ability to transition effectively from school to work (82%).
    - Employers in Rural Northern Alberta were less likely to be satisfied with recent graduates' ability to manage information from a variety of sources (56%).

Chart 2-1
Satisfaction with Non-Subject Specific Skills and Attributes
(among those who employ recent high school graduates)



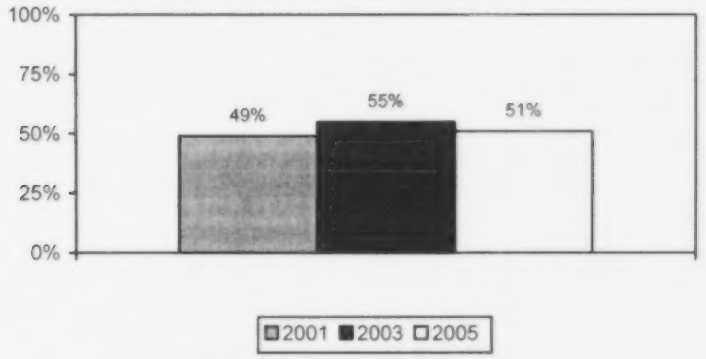
2005 n=499

SECTION 3: ARE ALBERTA EMPLOYERS ENCOURAGING THEIR EMPLOYEES TO LEARN CONTINUOUSLY?

Half (51%) of employers reported providing assistance to employees for education or training.

Similar to previous years, half (51%) of employers reported providing assistance for education/training (e.g. funding for tuition, leave of absence, paid time off work) in Alberta's education system.

Chart 3-1
Provided Assistance within Last Two Years



2005 n=2200

Differences in employer provided assistance were noted by company size, industry, and region.

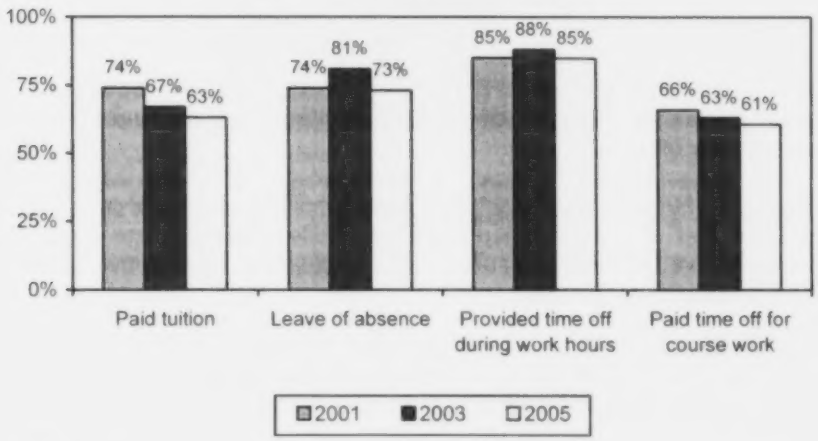
- Companies that employ 20 or more people (73%) were more likely to provide assistance for education or training.
- Employers in Education Services (74%), Health Care/Social Services (60%), and Manufacturing (63%) industries were more likely to provide assistance for education or training.
- Employers in Central Alberta (44%), including Rural Central Alberta (42%), were less likely to provide assistance.

3.1 Types of Assistance Provided

Providing time off during the workday and a leave of absence are the most prevalent forms of assistance provided for education and training.

Among employers who have provided any education or training assistance to their employees, 85% have provided time off during the working day and 73% have allowed leave of absence to assist employee education and training. About six in ten employers paid tuition (63%) or provided paid time off for specific course work (61%).

Chart 3-2
Types of Assistance Provided



2005 n=1122

Differences in the types of assistance provided by employers were found by company size, region and industry.

- Time off during work hours (88%) and paid tuition (69%) were more likely to be provided by employers with 20 or more employees.
- Paid tuition was more likely to be provided by employers in the Calgary region (70%) and less likely to be provided by employers in small cities (54%).
- Paid tuition was more likely to be provided by employers in Finance/Insurance (84%) and Education Services (78%) industries. A leave of absence was allowed more often by employers in the Manufacturing industry (83%).
- Paid time off for specific course work was more likely to be provided by employers in the Finance/Insurance (72%), Professional/Scientific/Technical Services industries (73%) and Mining/Oil & Gas Extraction (79%).

SECTION 4: OVERALL PERCEPTIONS OF ALBERTA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

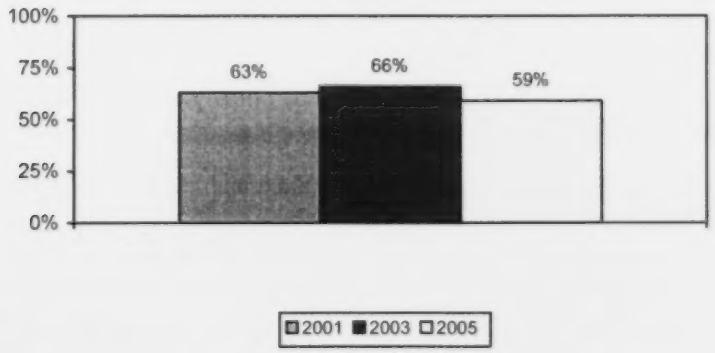
Employers who currently employ high school only graduates were asked to rate the extent to which they were satisfied that high school graduates:

- Are entering the workforce with an appropriate combination of skills and knowledge;
- Demonstrate the ability to learn at work; and
- Have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for learning throughout their lifetime.

In general, most employers were satisfied with high school graduates' combination of skills and knowledge, ability to learn at work and ability to learn throughout their lifetime.

About six-in-ten (59%) employers who currently employ high school graduates were satisfied ("satisfied" or "very satisfied") with their skills and knowledge when entering the work force. Twelve percent (12%) of employers refused to answer this question, or provided "don't know" responses.

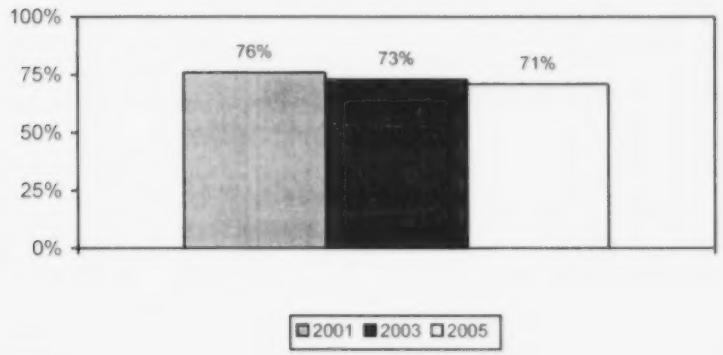
Chart 4-1
Satisfaction with Skills and Knowledge of High School Graduates Entering the Work Force



2005 n=1676

Almost three-quarters (71%) of employers who employ high school graduates were satisfied with high school graduates' ability to learn at work. Eleven percent (11%) of employers refused to answer this question, or provided "don't know" responses.

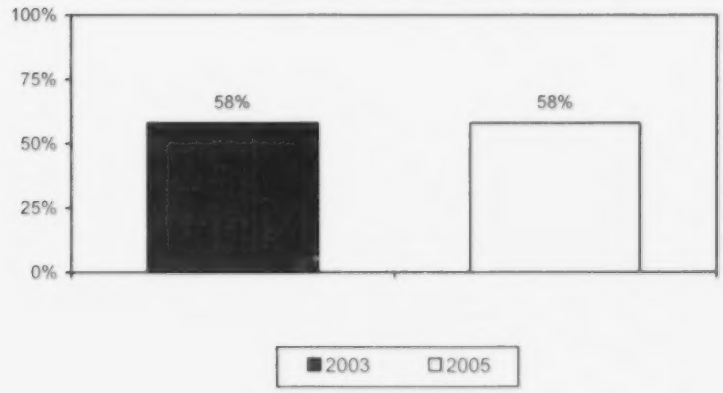
Chart 4-2
Satisfaction with High School Graduates' Ability to Learn at Work



2005 n=1676

Over half (58%) of employers surveyed were satisfied with high school graduates' ability to learn throughout their lifetime. Twelve percent (12%) of employers refused to answer this question, or provided "don't know" responses.

Chart 4-3
Satisfaction with High School Graduates' Ability to Learn Throughout Their Lifetime



2005 n=1676

Some differences observed regarding employers' satisfaction on these aspects:

- Satisfaction ratings for graduates' skills and knowledge were higher for employers in Accommodation/Food Services (69%) and Agriculture/Forestry/ Fishing/Hunting (76%) compared to other industries.

- Satisfaction with graduates' ability to learn throughout their lifetime was rated higher by employers in Arts/Entertainment/Recreation (71%).

- Satisfaction with graduates' ability to learn at work was rated higher by employers with 20 or more employees (75%).

APPENDIX A: RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Project Objectives

R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. was contracted to complete the *2005/2006 Employer Satisfaction Survey* on behalf of Alberta Education and Alberta Advanced Education. The purpose of the *Employer Satisfaction Survey* project was to assess Alberta employers' level of satisfaction with graduates from Alberta's education system. Specifically, the project collected survey information from employers to help determine the extent to which the outcome – *the education system meets the needs of all learners, society and the economy* – was being achieved.

The main objectives of the survey were to evaluate:

- Employers' satisfaction with the skills and knowledge of recent graduates (having graduated in the last two years) from Alberta's education system;
- Satisfaction with the non-subject specific skills of recent graduates hired; and
- Satisfaction with the overall responsiveness of Alberta's education system to employers' specific human resource needs.

In addition to the primary objectives, the project also had a number of secondary objectives. The secondary objectives included assessing the degree to which employers provide assistance for education and training, examining employers' perceptions on skills shortages among recent graduates and reasons for not hiring recent graduates. Finally, the project was designed to reveal changes in client satisfaction over time, and identify areas of strength and areas needing improvement in Alberta's education system.

Definitions

Program Graduates

- High School Only Graduates – having graduated from an Alberta high school, with recent high school graduates being defined as those who had graduated within the last two years.
- Degree Graduates – having graduated from an Alberta post-secondary institution (typically from a university).
- Post-Secondary Diploma Graduates – having graduated from an Alberta post-secondary institution (typically a 2 year program).
- Certificate Graduates – having graduated from an Alberta post-secondary institution (typically up to a 1 year program).
- Apprenticeship Program Graduates – having obtained a Journeyperson Certificate from Alberta Advanced Education.
- Less than high school – do not have a high school diploma.

Regions

Based on survey responses, employers' geographic locations were recoded into the following categories: Northern Alberta, Central Alberta, Southern Alberta, Rural North, Rural Central, Rural South, and Small Cities. The categories listed above were defined as:

- Small Cities – Included employers from the small cities of Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, Cold Lake, Red Deer, Camrose, Lloydminister, Wetaskiwin, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, and Brooks.
- Northern Alberta – Included employers from rural northern Alberta, consisting of the area north of Edmonton, as well as the small cities of Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie and Cold Lake.
- Central Alberta – Included employers from rural central Alberta, consisting of the area south of Edmonton and north of Calgary, as well as the small cities of Red Deer, Camrose, Lloydminister, and Wetaskiwin.
- Southern Alberta – Included employers from rural southern Alberta, consisting of the area south of Calgary, as well as the small cities of Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, and Brooks.
- Rural North – Included employers from rural northern Alberta, consisting of the area north of Edmonton, and excluding the small cities of Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie and Cold Lake.
- Rural Central – Included employers from rural central Alberta, consisting of the area south of Edmonton and north of Calgary, and excluding the small cities of Red Deer, Camrose, Lloydminister, and Wetaskiwin.
- Rural South – Included employers from rural southern Alberta, consisting of the area south of Calgary, and excluding the small cities of Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, and Brooks.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sampling

In total, 17,470 pieces of sample was purchased from RSTS Inc. for administration of the *2005/2006 Employer Satisfaction Survey*. The sample of employers was representative in regards to Statistics Canada's Census Divisions, as well as employee size and industry, which were based on Alberta Economic Development's *2004 Alberta Business Monitor*.

According to the *2004 Alberta Business Monitor*, there were 37,075 businesses in Alberta. Thus, obtaining 2,200 survey completions produced results with a margin of error of ± 2.0% 19 times out of 20.

Survey Pre-test

Field-testing was conducted between November 30th and December 1st, 2005. A total of 15 surveys were completed during field-testing. The average survey length during the field test period was 16 minutes.

Survey Modifications

The 2005 survey instrument was designed based on the 2003 Employer Satisfaction Survey instrument and included the following modifications:

- Industry categories in the 2003 survey were updated to be consistent with 2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) categories at the two digit level.
- Question 1E, 3E and Q4E were reorganized so that these questions asked about hiring high school only graduates *and* post secondary graduates in separate questions.
- Overall satisfaction with recent employees was asked separately for each type of graduate (Q2S1).
- Question 7S: one non-subject specific skill (the ability to transition effectively from school to work) was added to the list.
- Question 9S: the question was reworded to state, "Using a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 is "Strongly Agree" and 4 is "Strongly Disagree", how much do you agree that Alberta's learning system responds to the needs of your company by:"

As well, it was decided in consultation with the Client that when a situation arose where the surveyor encountered an employer that had more than one department and/or supervisor, the surveyor would request to speak with the supervisor who oversaw the highest number of recent graduates.

Survey Administration

Survey administration was undertaken between December 2nd, 2005 and December 19th, 2005. As many as 15 attempts were made to obtain survey completions from employers.

Table A-1
Use of Project Sample

	2005	
	Number	**% of Total**
TOTAL SAMPLE USED	**17470**	**100%**
Non-Valid Sample	1991	11%
Valid Sample	15479	89%
SAMPLE CONTACTED	**5594**	**32%**
• Non-Cooperative Sample	3185	18%
▪ Refusals	3185	18%
▪ Terminated	--	--
• Cooperative Sample	2409	14%
▪ Completes	2200	13%
▪ Incompletes	96	0.5%
▪ Communication/Language Problem	113	0.6%
Non-Qualifier (Screener QA)	1991	11%
RESPONSE RATE	--	**14%**
SAMPLE NOT CONTACTED	**9885**	**57%**
• Busy/No Answer	673	4%
• Fax/Modem/Not in Service	472	3%
• Answer Machine	1940	11%
• Callbacks Pending	3826	22%
• Quota Filled	2974	17%

Analysis

Once data collection was complete, the dataset was cleaned and coded. Where appropriate, similar codes were used for the open-ended responses as were used in previous years.

Basic descriptive statistics (frequencies) were generated from the final coded data set. Cross-tabulations were calculated for all questions against the following:

- Recent Graduate type (Q.2S);
- Company size (number of employees) (QA);
- Region (Q3F);
- Industry (QB); and
- Organization provided assistance to employees for education or training (Q6e).

For the purposes of this report, first-level data analysis included presentation of descriptive statistics (frequencies) for survey items in text, tables, and figures, as appropriate. The following should be noted with regard to the presentation of frequency data:

- Many items on the survey use four-point response scales including "very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied" or "strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree," etc., depending on the question. Although not asked, "don't know/not applicable" and "no response" (refusals) were recorded as well. Results presented in this report may represent percentages for each of the individual options in a response scale *or* the combined percentages of respondents who reported "very satisfied/satisfied" or "strongly agree/agree." Thus, in the body of the report, *overall* or *total* satisfaction or agreement refers to these combined percentages, whereas results pertaining to individual response-scale categories are specified separately in the text.

- Percentages are based on all responses for each item (i.e., "don't know/not applicable" and "no response" are included in the calculations). For all items, the "don't know/not applicable" and "no response" categories are combined into one category called "DK/NA/NR." Where applicable, the specific percentages of "don't know/not applicable" vs. "no response" are specified in the text.

- All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. For single response items, percentages may not total to 100% due to rounding. Similarly, rounded percentages for individual response options may not total exactly to combined percentages due to rounding.

- In the case of multiple response items for which participants could provide more than one response, percentages are expressed in terms of the number of respondents, and, as a result, percentages total to more than 100% for these variables.

Tests for significance were undertaken on all cross-tabulation tables using t-tests at the 0.05 level of significance. Only cross-tabs that were found to be significant were mentioned in the text of the final report. Where applicable, comparisons were made to the 2001 and 2003 survey results.

FIRMOGRAPHICS

Table A-2 below details the distribution of employers by business size, location, and industry compared to the 2003 survey results.

Table A-2
Distribution of Employer Sample

Business Size	**2003**	**2005**
1-4 employees	23.8%	27.5%
5-9 employees	25.2%	24.6%
10-19 employees	17.4%	18.0%
20 or more employees	33.6%	29.9%
Don't Know/No Response	--	--
Total	**100%**	**100%**
Geographic Location	**2003**	**2005**
Edmonton	22.0%	26.1%
Calgary	18.5%	27.5%
Northern Alberta	20.2%	14.5%
Central Alberta	19.4%	19.0%
Southern Alberta	20.0%	12.9%
Total	**100%**	**100%**
Industry Sector	**2003**	**2005**
Accommodation and Food Services	8.9%	6.6%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	9.5%	2.4%
Mining and Oil & Gas Extraction	--	5.0%
Construction	6.9%	5.9%
Manufacturing	4.3%	5.0%
Transportation & Warehousing	6.9%	3.9%
Wholesale Trade	2.6%	2.4%
Retail Trade	19.6%	17.1%
Finance & Insurance	5.7%	4.7%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	--	7.5%
Public Administration	3.6%	2.0%
Management of Companies & Enterprises	--	0.4%
Education Services	8.1%	5.3%
Health Care & Social Assistance	8.8%	7.4%
Admin. Support, Waste Management & Remediation Services	--	1.0%
Information & Cultural Industries	--	2.2%
Utilities*	--	0.8%
Real Estate**, Rental & Leasing	--	1.7%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	--	3.2%
Other Services (i.e. repair & maintenance, laundry services, personal care services, and religious organizations)	5.6%	13.9%
Business Services	9.8%	--
Other Mentions	--	1.1%
Don't Know/No Response	--	0.5%
Total	**100%**	**100%**

*Combined with "Transportation" in 2003
**Combined with "Finance and Insurance" in 2003

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE

EMPLOYER SATISFACTION SURVEY

November 2005 FINAL

Alberta Education / Alberta Advanced Education

INTRODUCTION

Initial Introduction:
Hi, my name is _____ and I am calling from _____, on behalf of Alberta Education and Alberta Advanced Education. I would like to speak to the most senior person responsible for human resources and staffing. Could you tell me who that would be? Could I please speak to him/her? Thank you.

IF ASKED FOR MORE INFORMATION, ADD:
Alberta Education is a provincial government department overseeing education services for K-12 in the province. Alberta Advanced Education is a provincial government department overseeing educational services for post-secondary, and industry/apprenticeship training for the province. I work for _____, a research company in _____ (location).

_____ (Record Name of Contact Person and set up a call back time if they are currently unavailable)

Once contact has been made:
Hi, my name is _____ and I am calling on behalf of Alberta Education and Alberta Advanced Education– two provincial government departments who, together, oversee all levels of education in the province. I work for _____, a research company in _____. We are conducting a study of employers throughout the province to gauge their opinions about how well Alberta's learning system is preparing its graduates for employment. The survey should only take about 15 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary. Can I complete the survey with you now?

1 – Yes	**CONTINUE**
2 – No	**ARRANGE CONVENIENT CALLBACK/ REINTRODUCE YOURSELF IF NECESSARY**

All information will be held in strict confidence and is protected under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Results will be reported in a combined response form only.

FIRMOGRAPHICS

I would like to begin by asking you some general questions about your company.

A. How many people does your company employ in Alberta (including yourself)?

NOTE: for ALL questions asking you to refer to your current employees, please also include any seasonal workers you may have employed in 2005.

1 – Sole proprietorship (no employees) **THANK AND TERMINATE AS NON-QUALIFIED**
2 – Other organization type (i.e. – non profit with volunteers only) **THANK AND TERMINATE AS NON-QUALIFIED**

3 - I__I__I__I__I__I__I employees

B. What type of industry is your company in? **[DO NOT READ]**

1 – Accommodation and Food Services
2 – Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting
3 – Mining and Oil & Gas Extraction
4 –Construction
5 – Manufacturing
6 – Transportation and Warehousing
7 – Wholesale Trade
8 – Retail Trade
9 – Finance and Insurance
10 – Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
11 – Public Administration
12 – Management of Companies and Enterprises
13 – Education Services
14 – Health Care & Social Assistance
15 – Administrative Support, Waste Management, and Remediation Services
16 – Information and Cultural Industries
17 – Utilities
18 – Real Estate, Rental and Leasing
19. – Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
20. – Other Services (i.e. Repair and Maintenance, Laundry Services, and Personal Care Services)

21 – Other (specify) _____

C. I am now going to ask you about the education levels of employees in your company. We are only interested in graduates from **Alberta** and their **highest** level of education. Could you tell me if you have any employees (including yourself) with the following education levels:

a) Employees with a high school diploma only – having graduated from an **Alberta** high school

1 – Yes
2 – No
9 – DK/NA

b) Employees with a degree – having graduated from an **Alberta** post-secondary institution (typically from a university)
c) Employees with a post-secondary diploma – having graduated from an **Alberta** post-secondary institution (typically a 2 year program)
d) Employees with a certificate – having graduated from an **Alberta** post-secondary institution (typically up to a 1 year program)
e) Employees who have completed an apprenticeship program
f) Employees with less than high school – do not have a high school diploma

I'd now like to ask you a few questions about the qualities of your employees and the education they have received.

*Graduates from Alberta's learning system will have either a high school diploma only or a post-secondary education. Post-secondary education entails graduates with a degree, diploma, or certificate from an **Alberta** university, college or technical institute, or a Journeyperson Certificate from Alberta Advanced Education.*

1Ea. Have any of the individuals working for your company graduated with a high school diploma only within the last two years?

1 – Yes
2 – No
9 – DK/NA

1Eb. Have any of the individuals working for your company graduated from a post secondary institution within the last two years?

1 – Yes
2 – No
9 – DK/NA

2E. Within the last 2 years, have you been looking to hire…
READ AND ROTATE

ASK IF 1Ea=2

a) **high school diploma only** graduates

1 – Yes
2 – No **GO TO Q.5E IF A - E**
9 – DK/NA **GO TO Q.5E IF A – E**

ASK IF 1Eb=2

b) **degree** graduates
c) **diploma** graduates
d) **certificate** graduates
e) **apprenticeship** graduates

ASK IF 2Ea=1

3Ea. What position(s)/occupations(s) were you looking to hire high school diploma only graduates for?
ACCEPT ALL ANSWERS (RECORD VERBATIM, PROBE FULLY, CLARIFY RESPONSES)

DK/NA

malatest
Program Evaluation
& Market Research

ASK IF 2Ea=1 and 1Ea=2

3Eb. Why didn't you hire recent **Albertan** high school diploma only graduates for these positions/occupations? **ACCEPT ALL ANSWERS (RECORD VERBATIM, PROBE FULLY, CLARIFY RESPONSES)**

DK/NA

ASK IF 2Eb, c, d, or e=1

4Ea) What position(s)/occupations(s) were you looking to hire post secondary graduates for? **ACCEPT ALL ANSWERS (RECORD VERBATIM, PROBE FULLY, CLARIFY RESPONSES)**

DK/NA

ASK IF 2Eb, c, d, or e=1 and 1Eb=2

4Eb. Why didn't you hire recent **Albertan** post secondary graduates for these positions/occupations? **ACCEPT ALL ANSWERS (RECORD VERBATIM, PROBE FULLY, CLARIFY RESPONSES)**

DK/NA

DO NOT ASK ABOUT SPECIFIC GRADS IF EMPLOYER DOES NOT HAVE ANY GRAD OF THAT TYPE IN C ON PAGE 2 (C=2,98,or 99) DO NOT INCLUDE LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL

5E. Now, I would like to ask questions regarding your opinions of graduates from Alberta's learning system in general. Using a scale from one to four, where one is "very satisfied" and four is "very dissatisfied", please rate to what extent you are satisfied with the following:

1 – Very Satisfied 2 – Satisfied 3 –Dissatisfied –4 Very dissatisfied 9 – DK/NA

a) That graduates are entering the workforce with an appropriate combination of skills and knowledge.

   For:
   i) High School Diploma only graduates
   ii) Degree graduates
   iii) Diploma graduates
   iv) Certificate graduates
   v) Apprenticeship graduates

b) That graduates demonstrate the ability to learn at work.

c) That graduates have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for learning throughout their lifetime, meaning they demonstrate literacy, numeracy, computer skills, motivation to learn, adaptability, self confidence and the ability to access learning opportunities.

6E. Has your organization provided assistance (for example - paying tuition, granting leave of absence, providing time off) to employees for education or training in Alberta's learning system in the last two years?

1 – Yes
2 – No **GO TO Q. 2S**
9 – DK/NA **GO TO Q. 2S**

7E. Has your organization provided the following types of assistance?
a) Paid tuition

1 – Yes
2 – No
9 – DK/NA

b) Allowed leave of absence
c) Provided time off during the working day
d) Paid time off for specific course work
e) Other (specify)_____

ASK SECTION S ONLY OF EMPLOYERS OF GRADUATES IN THE LAST 2 YEARS
If 1Ea and 1Eb = NO on page 3 SKIP TO SECTION F on page 8.

SECTION S.

2S. Approximately how many of your current staff members have graduated from **Alberta's learning system** within the last two years with … If unsure, Ask for best approximation.

a) **high school diploma only**

I__I__I__I__I number of employees
DK/NA

b) **a degree**
c) **a diploma**
d) **a certificate**
e) **a journeyperson certificate**

2S1. ASK FOR EACH TYPE OF EMPLOYEE (CODED OR MORE IN Q.2S): Thinking about the recent _____ (TYPE OF GRADUATE) graduates from Alberta's learning system you have working for your company please rate your OVERALL level of satisfaction with their skills and quality of work. Using a scale from one to four, where one is "very satisfied" and four is "very dissatisfied" what is your overall level of satisfaction with _____ (TYPE OF GRADUATE) graduates?

a) high school diploma only

1 – Very satisfied
2 – Satisfied
3 – Dissatisfied
4 – Very dissatisfied
9 – DK/NA

b) degree
c) diploma
d) certificate
e) journeyperson certificate

3S. Where are your recent graduates working? **ALLOW MULTIPLE RESPONSES**
READ ALL
1 – At this location
2 – In a field office (specify location)_____
3 – Other (specify)_____
9 – DK/NA

4S. I would now like to ask some specific questions about these recent graduates that your organization has hired. Would you be the best person to answer these questions or should I be talking to someone else, such as an immediate supervisor?

NOTE: if there is more than one department or supervisor, please refer to the supervisor who oversees the largest number of recent graduates.

1 – Same person **GO TO Q.7S on page 6**
2 – Different person/ supervisor(s) **GO TO Q.5S**

5S. May I please have the name, phone number and department of the individual(s), so I may speak with him/her directly? Is there anyone else we might contact?

Name	Phone #

GO TO SECTION F on page 7

NOTE: Q.6S IS PART OF SECTION Sa on page 9 – IT IS NOT MISSING.

SECTION S CONTINUED

I would now like to ask you some specific questions about these recent graduates ***of Alberta's learning system****. I have a short set of questions for each type of recent graduate you have on staff.*

7S. I will read various types of skills and personal qualities that graduates may be expected to have. Please rate the following skills of these graduates using a scale from 1 to 4 where 1 is "very satisfied" and 4 is "very dissatisfied". **READ AND ROTATE**

1 – Very Satisfied 2 – Satisfied 3 –Dissatisfied –4 Very dissatisfied 9 – DK/NA

a) The ability to communicate in speech and writing.

For:
- i) High School Diploma only graduates
- ii) Degree graduates
- iii) Diploma graduates
- iv) Certificate graduates
- v) Apprenticeship graduates

b) The ability to manage information from a variety of areas.
c) The ability to use numbers to decide what is required for the job.
d) The ability to think and solve problems.
e) Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours.
f) Being responsible for work and accountable for actions.
g) Being adaptable – Having the ability to work as an individual or within a team.
h) The ability to learn continuously.
i) The ability to work safely.
j) The ability to work with others towards a common goal.
k) The ability to participate and contribute in projects and tasks.
l) The ability to transition effectively from school to work.

8Sa. Can you think of any particular skills/ abilities that are missing from recent high school diploma only graduates? **ACCEPT <u>ALL</u> ANSWERS (RECORD VERBATIM, PROBE FULLY, CLARIFY RESPONSES)**

_____

_____

_____

DK/NA

8Sb. Can you think of any particular skills/ abilities that are missing from recent post secondary graduates? **ACCEPT <u>ALL</u> ANSWERS (RECORD VERBATIM, PROBE FULLY, CLARIFY RESPONSES)**

_____

_____

_____

DK/NA

9S. Using a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 is "Strongly Agree" and 4 is "Strongly Disagree", how much do you agree or disagree that Alberta's learning system responds to the needs of your company by:

READ AND ROTATE

1 – Strongly agree 2 – Somewhat agree 3 –Somewhat disagree –4 Strongly disagree 9 – DK/NA

a) providing an adequate supply of graduates

With:

i) a high school diploma only
ii) a degree
iii) a diploma
iv) a certificate
v) a Journeyperson's certificate

b) providing appropriate skills for graduates

SECTION F

1F. Do you have any other comments you would like to make about (**recent**) a) high school diploma only b) post secondary graduates of Alberta's learning system?

_____

_____

_____

9 - DK/NA

2F. What is your business postal code? **IF RESPONDENT IS RELUCTANT TO GIVE ENTIRE POSTAL CODE, ASK FOR FIRST THREE DIGITS.**

I__I__I__I I__I__I__I

And just to check that I've dialed the right number is this _____?
If incorrect number, ASK FOR ACTUAL NUMBER AND RECORD_____

3F. What area of the province are you currently located? [DO NOT READ]

1 Edmonton
2 Calgary
3 Ft. McMurray
4 Grande Prairie
5 Cold Lake
6 Red Deer
7 Camrose
8 Lloydminster
9 Wetaskiwin
10 Lethbridge
11 Medicine Hat
12 Brooks
13 Banff
14 Jasper
15 Rocky Mountain House
16 North Other – Including St. Paul, Athabasca, Bonnyville, Edson, Hinton, Grande Cache, High Level
17 Central Other – Including Sundre, Innisfail, Stettler, Lacombe, Drumheller, Wainwright
18 South Other – Including Brooks, Claresholm, Fort MacLeod, Cardston, Taber, High River
19 Other (please specify) _____

If we have any further questions, may we call you back?

1 Yes
2 No

These are all the questions I have. Thank you very much for your participation.

IF DIFFERENT PERSON/ SUPERVISOR(S) IN 4S on page 5 ASK...

You indicated that there would be a supervisor who will be the best person to answer questions about recent Alberta graduates that your organization has hired. Would you please be able to transfer me to the supervisor now?

1 – Yes Thank you. **GO TO SECTION Sa**
2 - No That's not a problem, please tell him/her that they can expect a call from us shortly **GO TO CALLBACK PAGE**

ASK SECTION Sa ONLY OF SUPERVISORS

SECTION Sa - Consists of New Contact Introduction 6S - 9S

NEW CONTACT

Hi, my name is _____ I am calling on behalf of Alberta Education and Alberta Advanced Education– two provincial government department who, together, oversee all levels of education in the province (Education services for K-12, post-secondary, and industry/apprenticeship training). I work for , a research company in_____. We've been conducting part of this study with _(Insert Name) from your company and they gave us your name suggesting you'd be able to help us. I have a few questions about your opinions of recent degree, diploma, certificate, apprenticeship and high school graduates your organization has hired. The questions should take only a few minutes. Is this a convenient time to talk to you?

1 – Yes **CONTINUE**
2 – No **ARRANGE CONVENIENT CALLBACK/ REINTRODUCE YOURSELF IF NECESSARY**

Recent graduates are individuals who have graduated within the last two years. Your participation is voluntary and all information will be held in strict confidence and is protected under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

ASK QUESTIONS 6S – 9S

6S. The following questions refer to graduates from **Alberta's learning system**. Are you able to respond to questions about the following types of graduates?

a) High School Diploma only graduates

1- Yes
2- No
9 – DK/NA

b) Degree graduates
c) Diploma graduates
d) Certificate graduates
e) Apprenticeship graduates

7S. I will read various types of skills and personal qualities that graduates may be expected to have. Please rate the following skills of these graduates using a scale from 1 to 4 where 1 is "very satisfied" and 4 is "very dissatisfied". **READ AND ROTATE**

1 – Very Satisfied 2 – Satisfied 3 –Dissatisfied –4 Very dissatisfied 9 – DK/NA

a) The ability to communicate in speech and writing.

For:
- i) High School Diploma only graduates
- ii) Degree graduates
- iii) Diploma graduates
- iv) Certificate graduates
- v) Apprenticeship graduates

b) The ability to manage information from a variety of areas.
c) The ability to use numbers to decide what is required for the job.
d) The ability to think and solve problems.
e) Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours.
f) Being responsible for work and accountable for actions.
g) Being adaptable – Having the ability to work as an individual or within a team.
h) The ability to learn continuously.
i) The ability to work safely.
j) The ability to work with others towards a common goal.
k) The ability to participate and contribute in projects and tasks.
l) The ability to transition effectively from school to work.

8Sa. Can you think of any particular skills/ abilities that are missing from recent high school diploma only graduates? **ACCEPT ALL ANSWERS (RECORD VERBATIM, PROBE FULLY, CLARIFY RESPONSES)**

DK/NA

8Sb. Can you think of any particular skills/ abilities that are missing from recent post secondary graduates? **ACCEPT ALL ANSWERS (RECORD VERBATIM, PROBE FULLY, CLARIFY RESPONSES)**

DK/NA

9S. Using a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 is "Strongly Agree" and 4 is "Strongly Disagree", how much do you agree or disagree that Alberta's learning system responds to the needs of your company by:

READ AND ROTATE

Alberta's learning system responds to the needs of my company by:

1 – Strongly agree 2 – Somewhat agree 3 –Somewhat disagree –4 Strongly disagree 9 – DK/NA

a) providing an adequate supply of graduates

With:

i) a high school diploma only
ii) a degree
iii) a diploma
iv) a certificate
v) a journeyperson's certificate

b) providing appropriate skills for graduates

IF SUPERVISOR HAS COMPLETED SECTION Sa ASK...
If we have any further questions, may we call you back?

1 Yes
2 No

These are all the questions I have. Thank you very much for your participation.